

CV

Christopher Dell (Prof. Dr. phil. habil.) works as a theoretician in urban design and architecture, as composer, as musician and as artist in Berlin and Copenhagen. He is the head of ifit, Institute for Improvisation Technology, Berlin. Dell held professorships in Urban Design Theory at the HafenCity Universität Hamburg (where he contributed to the conceptualizing and establishing of the newly founded Master's programme Urban Design) and the Technical University Munich. In addition he held the chair for Urban Design and Urban Renewal at the University of Fine Arts, Berlin. In the international context his Urban Design teachings also include a.o. the Architectural Association London, the University of the Witwatersrand Johannesburg, the Fine Arts Academy Arnhem, the Architecture School Bergen, the HSL Luzern and the ETH Zurich.

Holding a PhD in Organization Psychology and a habilitation in Cultural Science, Dell has published numerous books and articles, mainly on the subject of urban studies. Since 2017, Dell has been a member of the North Rhine-Westphalian Academy of Sciences and Arts. In 2020 he joined integral designers network, Paris as associated member. In the framework of the Venice Architecture Biennale 2021, Dell collaborated with Christophe Hutin Architects on the French pavilion. He took up a fellowship abroad at the Studio for Architecture of the Federal Republic of Germany at the Cité Internationale des Arts Paris in 2022. Together with Sally Below, he curated the performative installation and exhibition project "Piazza Spinelli" as a contribution to the International Building Exhibition Heidelberg 2022.

In addition to numerous essays and book contributions, Dell has published an extensive body of monographs: "Prinzip Improvisation", Köln 2002, „Improvisations on Urbanity“ Rotterdam 2009 (with Ton Matton), „Tacit Urbanism“, Rotterdam 2009, „Replaycity“, Berlin 2011, „Die improvisierende Organisation“, Bielefeld 2012, „Ware:Wohnen!“, Berlin 2013, „Das Urbane“, Berlin 2014, „Epistemologie der Stadt“ Bielefeld 2016, „Stadt als offene Partitur“ Zürich 2016, „Improvisation und Organisation“ (with Wolfgang Stark) Bielefeld 2017, „The Improvisation of Space“ Berlin 2019, "Das Arbeitende Konzert/ The Working Concert" Leipzig 2020, "Tom paints the Fence, Re-Negotiating Urban Design" (with Bernd Kniess and Dominique Peck), Leipzig 2022, „Dialogue Concerts. Conceptual Research on

Architecture and Music“, Leipzig 2022, “Raum und Handlung“, Bielefeld 2023, “Piazza Spinelli. Übungsraum für die Stadt“ (with Sally Below), Berlin 2024 and “Raumpolitik“, Bielefeld 2025.

As a composer and musician, Christopher Dell works in the realm of contemporary music at the intersection of representation and non-representational procedures. Dell was a fellow of the Ferienkurse für Neue Musik where he took masterclasses with Karl-Heinz Stockhausen, Wolfgang Rihm and Earle Brown. Deeply influenced by the composition classes in the Schillinger system he took at Berklee College of Music, Boston, Dell expanded his knowledge in serialism by taking lessons with the late Hans-Ulrich Engelmann in Darmstadt. Equally important in regard to conceptional work were the encounters with the composers and theorists George Lewis and Barbara Heller. Against this background, as a composer Dell focuses on the thematization and the framing of the production of musical space and the expansion of the concept of what he terms “composition strategies”.

Dell has developed a distinctive body of work characterized by constant research, conceptual discursiveness, and the creation of experimental systems that transcend disciplines. Operating through the medium of the concert, Christopher Dell’s work is a transhistorical investigation of the condition of musical representation and production. Functioning as both conceptual and serial music and institutional critique, Dell’s super-formalism crafts historically and politically referential procedures that analyze the epistemological frameworks of aesthetic conventions and the contemporary context of music making. The Neue Zürcher Zeitung wrote: “For Dell, “years of “musical research work” have borne fruit. His music is ... completely unique in our time.” Dell is and has been involved in numerous recording releases and tours, including Europe, Canada, China, U.S.A., Japan, India, Africa, South America.

In 2001 Christopher Dell established the artist label edition niehler werft (enw). The label operates as medium and as publishing platform for the extended musical works, activities and collaborations of Dell. **enw** produces artist CDs, Vinyl Records, DVD and artist’s books in small editions, experimenting with the format that redefines the realm traditionally occupied by the recording. Inspired by the independence from the economic logic of the

mainstream music and art market, the idea of an artist label as 'alternative space' has led Dell to devote utmost attention to the medium.

For his work as composer and musician Dell received a number of awards such as „Deutscher Schallplattenpreis“, „JazzArt Award- Musik des 21. Jahrhunderts", Musicprize of the City of Darmstadt and Golden Jazz Award. As soloist he contributed to the Grammy-nominated recording "Blauklang" by Vince Mendoza. In 2021, Dell received the first German Jazz Prize, followed by the Hessian Jazz Prize in 2022. Dell has received scholarships, grants and composition commissions from, among others, the Staatstheater Darmstadt, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, the German Music Council, the city of Witten, the state of Hesse, the state of Berlin, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media, the Initiative Musik and the German Music Fund. He has worked with the symphony orchestra of the Staatstheater Darmstadt, the ensembles Hyperion, Mosaik, Musikfabrik, Modern, Resonanz, Klangforum Wien and the Austrian Ensemble for New Music. In 2025, Dell will be staying at Villa Waldberta as part of the City of Munich's artist-in-residence programme and work with the Munich-based ensemble der/gelbe/klang.

Lately Dell's montage-work "Das Arbeitende Konzert/ The Working Concert" came to prominence internationally, being performed in Germany, Austria and Italy. The book under the same title was published in 2020 by the renowned artistbook publisher Spector Books, Leipzig. Dell's solo work is grouped under the framework "Monodosis". His most important ensembles at the moment are DRA and the composer-performer-trio Dell-Lillinger-Westergaard.

In toto Dell's work is instigated by motives – themes and questions – of the contemporary city. Dell understands the city as an relational process, that comes about through the constructive work with contingency in an assemblage of actors, things, actions, discourses and vectors on sites. The epistemological framework under which Dell analysis this process is the notion of "improvisation technology". Being driven by motives, his work can take on different forms – such as writing a book, teaching urban design and architecture theory, playing or composing music, publishing a sound medium, lecture-performing, creating a sound installation, curating exhibitions or making objects. Within this diversity one aspect

stays crucial: rather than displaying already produced objects inside an institution, Dell is interested in exhibiting the field of the production and reception of the artwork and the way it activates discourse. One can see Dell's work as a cross-disciplinary *recherche durée*. It is highly conceptual in the way it always thematizes the procedure with which it operates and reveals the context in which it appears or intervenes.

Dell is endorser of Vic Firth Mallets.